

Sustainable Backyard Program: RAIN BARRELS

**50% off
Rebate
Inside!**

Also available: Rebates for **Compost Bins**, **Trees**, and **Native Plants**



Why Install a Rain Barrel at Home?

- Rain water is free!
- Your plants will thank you. Tap water contains chlorine, which, while important for keeping our drinking water safe, can inhibit the health of our plants.
- When combined with your neighbors' efforts, disconnecting your downspout and installing a rain barrel reduces the risk of basement flooding in your area.
- Keep water in the natural water cycle and increase groundwater supply by directing water to your yard instead of the sewer system.
- Improve water quality in the Chicago, Calumet and Des Plaines Rivers by helping to prevent combined sewer overflows.

DID YOU KNOW: Chicagoans consume over 500 million gallons of water per day! That's equivalent to over 800 Olympic-size swimming pools.

The Issue:

After stormwater falls on your roof and travels down your downspouts, it combines with wastewater from your house and flows to the city's sewer. As shown in the diagram to the right, this can lead to basement flooding and street ponding.

We can help!

Rebates

We want to give you 50% off (up to \$40) any locally-purchased rain barrel! All you have to do is fill out the attached rebate form and send it in with your original purchase receipt. See rebate form (attached) for more details.

Workshops

Attend a free Sustainable Backyard Workshop! The Chicago Department of Environment, along with its Sustainable Backyard partners, will be hosting a series of free informative workshops across the city. You'll learn what you can do to green your backyard; the basics of installing and maintaining rain barrels, compost bins, trees and native plants; and where to go for more resources. For more details, visit www.cityofchicago.org/rainbarrel.

Resources

To hear more about rain harvesting in the city, visit the Chicago Rain Harvesting Blog at www.chicagorainharvesting.wordpress.com/

I. Basement Flooding

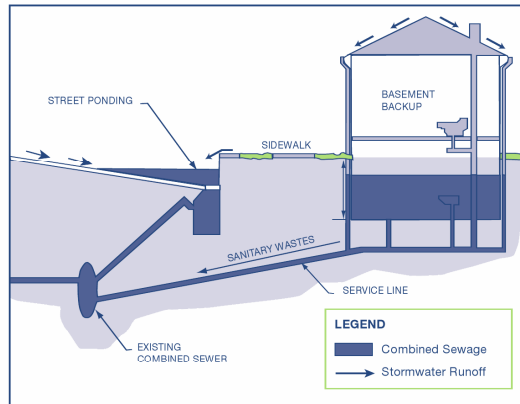


Diagram I: During heavy rains, the sewer system can become too full, causing untreated combined sewage to both back up into basements and the street and flow into the river system (this is called a combined sewer overflow, or CSO).

II. Disconnected Downspouts and Rainblockers

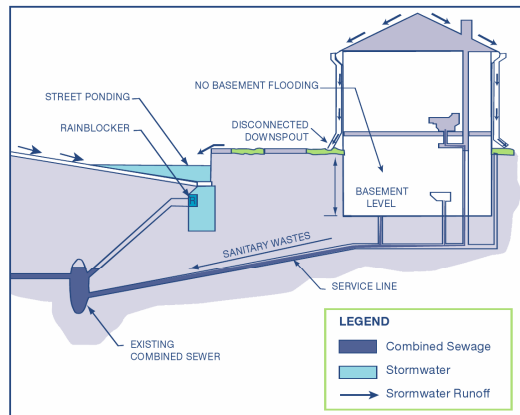


Diagram II: Keeping stormwater out of the sewers helps to prevent basement back-ups and combined sewer overflows (CSOs).

Disconnected downspouts, if directed to pervious surfaces, allow stormwater to soak into the ground. Rainblockers, placed in the catch basins by the City, also help by slowing the flow of stormwater entering the sewers, causing temporary street ponding of stormwater. As this brochure describes, additional features such as rain barrels, permeable paving, deep-rooted landscaping and green roofs also help to keep water out of the sewers.

Note: Disconnecting your downspout is not always appropriate.

RAIN BARRELS: how it works...

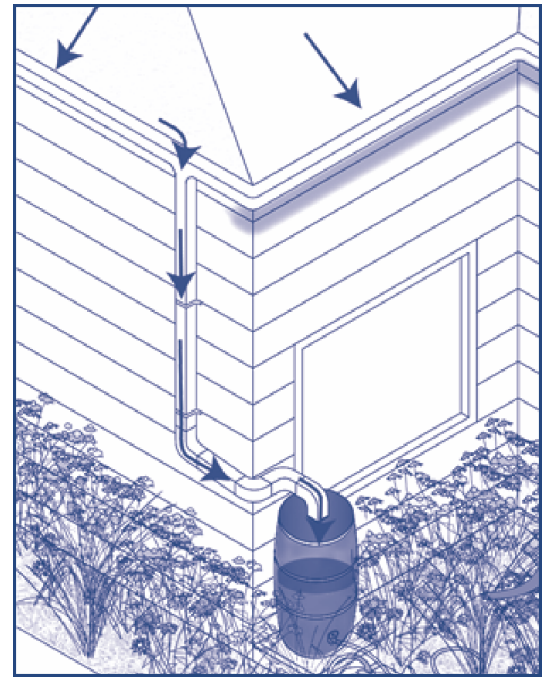
Is it Appropriate for my Yard?

Before you begin, decide whether or not it is appropriate to disconnect your downspout. In a typical half-inch storm a 1,000 square foot roof will produce about 312 gallons of water, while most rain barrels hold about 55 gallons. Consider where you are directing that water.

- The area surrounding the disconnected downspout should have enough permeable surface to soak up water overflowing from your barrel. Your barrel WILL overflow! Consider planting trees and other leafy, deep-rooted plants nearby.
- Consider the slope of your yard. Overflow should not run toward your foundation or onto your neighbor's property.
- Stormwater should not flow over walkways since the water may freeze in cold weather and cause slippery conditions.

Materials You'll Need

- Downspout elbow(s)
- Raised base: cinder blocks, bricks or wooden platform
- For aluminum downspouts: hacksaw, screws, screwdriver
- For PVC downspouts: hacksaw, PVC cement
- OPTIONAL: hose to attach to spigot, downspout diverter

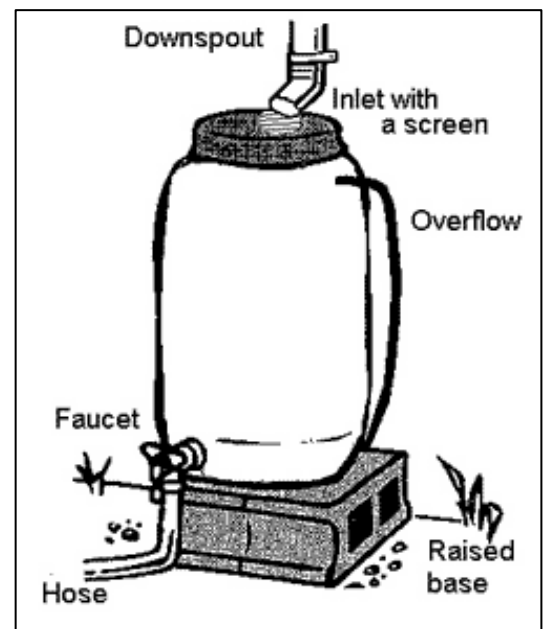


Disconnecting Your Downspout & Installing Your Rain Barrel:

1. **Choose** a downspout near your garden.
2. **Secure** your downspout to the house with a bracket
3. **Cut** downspout using a hacksaw at least 4 inches above the top of your rain barrel. **Note:** You may need to account for length of elbows and raised base.
4. **Attach** downspout elbow with screws or PVC cement.
5. **Plug** the sewer standpipe (the open hole where your downspout once was) with a rubber plug or crumpled newspaper topped with 1" mortar cement.

Using and Maintaining Your Rain Barrel:

- DO NOT DRINK THE WATER!
- Empty your barrel frequently; depending on the size of your roof and rain barrel, a 1/2" rain may cause barrel to overflow.
- Common rain barrel issues are generally the result of neglect. Your rain barrel will only attract insects or become stagnant if it is left unattended for long periods of time.
- Regularly check for leaks, obstructions, debris and integrity of screen.
- Before temperatures fall below freezing, barrel should be drained and spigots left open, stored upside-down, or stored indoors to prevent freezing and cracking. Some rain barrel users reconnect their downspout in the winter using the straight piece of pipe left over from the disconnection process.
- Maximize your stormwater efforts by planting deep-rooted perennials or trees in your yard! Visit the Sustainable Backyard Program website for more information: www.cityofchicago.org/rainbarrel.



City of Chicago Rebate Form: RAIN BARREL

Thank you for purchasing a rain barrel and for helping Chicago conserve water and manage stormwater. Please provide the following information and original itemized receipt to receive your rebate. **Illegible or incomplete forms will not be accepted.**

Personal Information

(please print clearly to receive your rebate):

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: Chicago Zip: 606 _____

Phone: () _____

Email Address: _____

Barrel installed at: ☐ same address as above

Address: _____

City: Chicago Zip: 606 _____

Where did you hear about this program? _____

Where did you get this rebate form? _____

Barrel Information

Where did you purchase your barrel? _____

Date of Purchase: _____

Brand/Model: _____

Barrel capacity: _____ gallons

How large is your roof? _____ (sq ft)

How many downspouts do you have? _____

Was your downspout already disconnected? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Does your yard or basement ever flood? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Would you have purchased this item if a rebate was not available? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Total Spent: \$ _____

Total Rebate Requested (50%, up to \$40): \$ _____

I pledge the information I have provided is accurate and that I have read and understand the attached information. Signature: _____

Date: _____

(sign here)

CUT HERE - Below This Line is for Your Records

Rebate Information

- Original receipt (be sure receipt clearly indicates purchase) and completed Rebate Form must be post-marked by December 31, 2011. The City of Chicago reserves the right to deny rebate forms with unclear receipts.
- Rebate checks may take up to 3 months to process.
- Rebate amount: 50% off original purchase price, up to \$40 rebate, per household, per year.
- If you have any questions on the rebate process, please call 312.743.9283 or email rainbarrel@cityofchicago.org.
- Maximum rebates: Rain Barrels \$40, Compost Bins \$50, Native Plants \$60, Trees \$100.

To receive your rebate, please complete the top of this form and submit it along with the original purchase receipt by December 31, 2011, to:

Chicago Sustainable Backyard Program
Chicago Department of Environment
30 N. LaSalle, 2nd Floor
Chicago, IL 60602

Rebate Rules/Restrictions

- Rebates are only available to City of Chicago residents and rain barrels must be installed at a Chicago residence. Limit one of each rebate type (rain barrel, compost bin, tree, native plants) per installation address, per year. Residents are encouraged to purchase more than one tree and native plant, but should submit all 2011 native plant and tree rebates at once.
- Rain barrel must be purchased between September 1, 2010 and December 31, 2011.
- Rebates will not be offered for rain barrels purchased online or outside the state of Illinois. Rebates are only available for the cost of rain barrels. Other materials, taxes and individual costs will not be applied to rebates.



Richard M. Daley
Mayor



Department of
Environment

